

Athenian News :

O R,

Dunton's Oracle.

From **Saturday** April the 8th, to **Tuesday** April the 11th, 1710.

The Sibil-Post, or Ideal Kingdom, being a new and mysterious Discovery made for the Use of the Ladies; to be continu'd in Dunton's Oracle, 'till all the Colonies are planted.

TRansported with the Hopes the *Sibil* at our next Meeting wou'd fully satisfy my Curiosity, I often repair'd to the Walk where I first saw her: After several Disappointments, I was so happy as to meet her there; she smiling said, *I know your Expectation, which now I'll satisfy*, and thus she spoke. In order to plant the next Colony of *curious Fancy*, the high Monarch was pleas'd to issue out his Proclamation, declaring that all Persons that were conscious to themselves of coming into the World with such innate Principles of Knowledge and Understanding that render'd all Rules and Instructions useless to 'em, and whose Genius gave 'em the most accomplish'd Perfections, whereby they not only acted wisely themselves, but were the proper nice Judges of the Follies and Imperfections of others: Of such as these he desires his Colony of *curious Fancy* may be planted; and for their Encouragement, if they shew themselves zealous for his Honour, and produce good Effects of *curious Fancy*, to the Advancement of his Fame and Glory, they shou'd have all Grants and Priviledges necessary for carrying on so great a Design.

The Governour was not chosen from amongst themselves, but a Man of common Sense appointed by His Majesty's special Order, as one more yielding and complying than those superlative Tempers that are both apt to provoke others, and no less to be provok'd themselves. It was a fine Country, a pleasant and pure Air, proper to preserve Wit in its native Purity. So considerable an Advantage was no sooner represented to the Governour, than the greatest Speed imaginable was made by all the studious, speculative Men, to take up the most proper Places for their Designs, which were such at were most remote, and free from Noise.

The next that posted thither were the Philosophers of all Kinds; their Business was the Refining and Improvement of Nature; they strove to place themselves in every Body's Way, for they had Business with every Body.

The Noise of these wise Men's sudden Departure mov'd the Curiosity of all the Ladies of Wit and great Parts; and when they understood it was to advance the Fame and Glory of that mighty Monarch, to whom they knew themselves as much devoted as the best of 'em, they soon prepare their Equipage and are gone.

The Governour thought fit to send to the *Poets*, advising 'em not to give themselves up to Sloth and Effeminacy, but hasten to the Colony. It was worth their Pains to be plac'd amongst such *Virtuoso's* that wou'd give Subject enough for Panegyrick and Satyr, in some Occasions, besides the Advantage their Thoughts wou'd have from the Pureness of the Air; and tho' they cou'd not well be carry'd their usual Way in Chairs, they might for once comply with the rough Way of Coaches. Some Ladies, great Votaries to Poetry, frighted at their Delay, were at the Charge of laying Chair-men all the Way, which was not found difficult to do, by those Men who carry every Day Colonels and great Lords, of much more Weight and bigger Bulk than Poets generally are.

There were some Ladies, Owners of great Fortunes and Riches, not at all addicted to reading, their Genius carrying 'em more to Actions of Curiosity than Speculation: They built Houses, and planted Gardens after their own Fancies, and furnish'd 'em with far fetch'd Curiosities, Trees, and Statues of great Price: They hated doing any thing in the common Way, and therefore chose to make their Kitchens and inferior Offices more magnificent than their upper Apartments; and in them they plac'd their Favourite Pictures, China, and other Kinds of Earthen Ware, that pleas'd their particular Fancy. They were in no Danger of the rough, ill Usage of Servants, whose Business seldom lay there: For the exact Curiosity of cooking their Meat, requir'd to have it done in their Bed-Chambers, in their own Presence, as far as 'twas possible, but in some Thing they were forc'd to condescend. They were often at as Loss to satisfy their Curiosity in the Choice of the best Meat; not finding Servants Judgments nice enough for that Employment, they were forc'd to apply to the Governour to have the Market brought to the Back-door of their Gardens, that so by fortifying themselves with good Herbs from the Danger of ill Scents, they might be able to go themselves and make the best Choice. These Niceties created great Admiration in all that had Judgments capable of discerning 'em; but the *Poets* were to the highest Degree transported, to find they had not lost their

their Labour in coming to a Place where those Ladies Actions had given the noblest Theams that could employ a curious Fancy; the Ladies of another Genius, that had compos'd many curious Pieces of Wit and Poetry, yet had fail'd of the Applause the other active Ladies found in the many Panegyrics the Poets bestow'd upon 'em; they so resented that Injustice, it turn'd all their Wit against the Poets, to ridicule and satyr all they wrote; which set 'em so upon Revenge, all they could say on this Occasion, had more the Air of Spleen and Envy, than the least Touch of curious Fancy, and exquisite Poetry.

The Governour much confounded at this Mistake he had made, of *inviting the Poets*, which had so ill succeeded, thought to redeem his Credit, by putting the *Naturalists* into a better Way, perswading 'em, by the Practice of Physick do make their Studies a more general Benefit, he prevail'd with 'em so far, that they were soon form'd into a Society, and Colledges erected for their Students: But yet an unforeseen Difficulty appear'd in their Practice, they could not resolve to set a just Estimate upon their Skill; but if those who sent for 'em, were Persons that liv'd delicately, impatient of Pain, and Sickness, or in great Fear of losing such a sweet and pleasant Life; if it were any of their good Fortunes to make a speedy Cure, it so enhanc'd the Reputation of that lucky Doctor, he presently sets up for an *Humorist*, and comes only when he pleases, and at an exorbitant Price. But for Persons more patient and resign'd, they found a Way to pay themselves, by the Experiments they made upon 'em, of more Value than half their Fee. But this would not pass with those nice active Ladies of Curiosity, who soon perceiv'd the dishonest Subtily of those Physicians, and display'd it every where in their Converse; advising all Persons cautiously to avoid coming into the Hands of Physicians, or Chirurgeons; assuring 'em, they had Herbs in their Gardens, which they knew how to apply, wherewith they could effect greater Cures than any the Doctors or Chirurgeons had ever done. This mov'd the Indignation of the Physicians to that Degree, they resolv'd to quit the Colony, finding it a very improper Place to enrich themselves in, now the rich Ladies were their declar'd Enemies, and the rest had so little Occasion for 'em; since the contemplative Mens Temperance and Moderation sufficiently preserv'd their Healths, and the spiritual Ladies eating little, and exercis'd every Day in News hunting, seldom contracted any considerable Diseases, unless some Disappointment brought upon 'em Spleen and Vapours, of which they might be cur'd without the Advice of Doctors. And to express their Resentments against those active Ladies of Curiosity, they were publicly heard to say, They thought it little for their Honour to declare themselves *Female Mountebanks*; but they should leave 'em to make the best of that Colony.

When they were gone, the Governour amaz'd at these Proceedings, not being able to foresee the End, speedily address'd to the Mighty Monarch, representing the ill Estate of Affairs in this Colony; that nothing yet had much tended to the Honour of curious Fancy, for all that the learned contemplative Men had done, serv'd only to raise such Expectations as they had never yet been able to satisfy; and for the Philosopher's Improvements of Nature, it all ended in empty Projects, to enrich themselves, which came to nothing, neither bring-

ing Glory to his Majesty, nor Profit to any, as those active Ladies of Curiosity order'd it; whose Wisdoms hinder'd 'em in the Practice of Physick, that they were forc'd to leave the Colony. It could not be deny'd, those Ladies Actions had produc'd more solid Effects of Curiosity; yet the Difficulty they were under to find Persons capable of performing their Dictates, made their Noise and Clamour insupportable to all Persons of Business in their Neighbourhood; and for the witty Ladies, their Works serv'd only to harbour Dust, and make a Litter; for once read, and talk'd on for a little Time, they were laid by, and no more thought on; he therefore beseech'd they might be banish'd, for his Government would stand better without Ladies; for hitherto he had experienc'd they were more apt to do Harm than Good. The Tyrant enrag'd at his pragmatistical Address, order'd the Governour's Head to be brought to him; protesting he would ne'er be deceiv'd by Men of common Sense, which was but one Degree remote from Reason, that vile Traitor, and fierce Rebel against *curious Fancy*. To remedy this, and prevent further Mischief, his Majesty gave out a strict Order of Council, that some Person of approv'd Loyalty might be sought out, to be presented to that Government; which was done with all Diligence: And at last a *great Chymist* was found, who had spent much Time and Money in *Search of the Philosopher's Stone*. This Person was much approv'd by his Majesty, who declar'd his Satisfaction; telling 'em, he cou'd now promise himself the flourishing of that Colony under such a Governour; since 'tis certain nothing can shock that firm Hope and invincible Patience of one that cou'd so long support the Disappointments that attends the *Search after the Philosopher's Stone*; and therefore would be the least inclin'd to pronounce rashly against the Performances of others, as the late Governour had done, to the great Trouble and Disturbance of curious Fancy.

The Casuistical-Post, or Athenian Mercury.

Quest. Mr. Dunton, having sent several Questions to that dull Blockhead M. Smith, the late Author of the British Apollo, and receiving no satisfactory Answer, I now apply my self to your Oracle, for the Solution of the following Questions. In the Fourth of Gen. 16, 17, v. we are told that Cain went forth from the Presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the Land of Nod, on the East of Eden, and Cain knew his Wife, and she conceiv'd and bare Enoch, &c. Pray how long time may we suppose Cain's Marriage to be after his Departure, and from what Lineage did his Wife spring? Your speedy Answer will much oblige a great Admirer of your Dying Farewells, M. P.

Ans. The Text affirms only that Cain knew his Wife after his Settlement in the Land of Nod, not that he married after his Departure. If the Authority of Josephus may satisfy, as to the Point of Time, he tells us, that Cain took his Wife along with him, at his Departure; and indeed the Necessity of the Case must convince us that he did so, in Regard the Land of Nod was unfurnish'd with Women at Cain's coming there. Josephus will also tell you, that Cain and Abel had each of them Children, before the Murther was committed. If that be true, it strengthens the Solution, That his Marriage was before his Departure. As to the Marriage it self, I suppose

suppose there wou'd not be much Ceremony about it; for Cain was a meer *Graceless*, according to *L'Estrange's* Translation. As to the Lineage of Cain's Wife, I am no Friend to *Pre-adamites*, and suppose she was Cain's own Sister; for if any one will give himself the Liberty to consider the Case, over a Pipe of Tobacco, he will rise fully satisfy'd, that the second Couple in the World must have been Brother and Sister, or something worse. St. Paul was not ashamed to acknowledge in the *Arepagus* at Athens, that God had made of one Blood the whole Race of Mankind, Acts 17. 26.

Q. Where was the Land of Nod?

A. It lay to the East of Eden, and signifies the Land where Cain wander'd in his Banishment. He himself is call'd *Nad*, a *Vagabond*. And *Nod* comes from the Root *Nud*, he wander'd.

Q. Mr. Dunton, Tho' I'm very unwilling to expose my Ignorance, yet I must freely own, that reading y^e other Day, the 2d Chap. of a Latin Book, entitl'd *Ars Cogitandi*; where the Author undertakes to prove, that we can clearly conceive Things which we cannot imagine; and for an Instance, affirms, we can imagine a Triangle, but not a Chiliogon. Thus far I am pretty clear; but when he comes to prove that he can clearly conceive a Chiliogon, he proves it, by saying that he can demonstrate all its Properties, as that all its Angles are equal to 1996 right Angles. Why are not all the Angles of a Chiliogon equal to 2000 right Angles, i. e. why shou'd Four be excepted?

A. A Chiliogon being a Figure of a 1000 Sides, or Angles, it may be divided into a 1000 Triangles, and every Triangle will have its Angles equal to Two right ones; so that all the Angles together wou'd make Two Thousand; but the right Angles which are about the Point in the Middle of the Chiliogon, are not reckon'd into the Number, so Four are excepted, and the remaining right Angles are 1996. I wou'd not willingly have taken Notice of so plain a Question, but that the End of my Oracle is to instruct.

Q. Mr. Dunton, In Regard you have declar'd your self free from the Prejudices of all Parties; a Qualification very proper for him who has Business with all Mankind, I wou'd gladly learn your Thoughts, whether all Set Forms of Prayer are lawful, and whether they assist or stifle Devotion in their natural Tendency?

A. 'Tis difficult to meddle with a Question of this Nature; but others will judge what Party I engage in, tho' unjustly. I have no farther Interest in the Decision of this Question either Way, than as it may serve, or disserve the common Interest of living Religion. As to the first Question, I declare my Judgment, that Set Forms of Prayer are lawful in themselves; this is manifest from the Prescription of the Lord's Prayer, and the Form of Blessing prescrib'd to the Priests, Numb. 6. 24, &c. But if the Querist designs to ask, Whether Set Forms of Human Composition may lawfully be impos'd, and others tied to the Use of them under Penalties, &c. I must beg his Pardon for my Silence upon that Head, I don't think my self able to work Miracles upon either Side, by any Decision of mine. The Second Question is, Whether Set Forms of Prayer in their natural Tendency, do assist or stifle Devotion? This Question may be answer'd both in the Affirmative, and Negative, as it bears a Reference to different Persons. Habits contracted by long Custom, lay Men under a Kind of Impotency either Way. I shall deliver my Judgment in the Words of *Phil. Limborch*,

Theolog. Christ. Pag. 467. Nos dicimus, Preces ejusmodi extemporales, si quis Aptitudinem habuit eas formandi, laudabiles esse, & ad Terrorem & Attentionem excitandum accommodatas: Formula quippe praescripta omnia Particularia, & omnibus Casibus Convenientia, etiam quoad spiritualia continere nequeunt: Neque plane sequuntur affectus nostros internos, ubi in omni precatione conveniens est, sed eos aliquatenus praecedunt, & ducunt; ac tandem, quia Memoria inherens, & ex Consuetudine recitantur facile fit, at lepidiores in precando reddemur, & in verbis prolatis acquiescamus, seu verba nuda recitentur absque Mentem. We affirm, (says that charitable Divine) that free Prayers deserve to be commended, if the Person engag'd have an apt Capacity to form them, and they are well suited to excite both Attention, and Devotion. Prescrib'd Forms can't take in all Particulars, no not in Spirituals, that are suitable to all Cases; nor indeed do they follow our inward Devotion, as is convenient in all Prayer, but they go before and lead those Affections, and at the long Run, being fix'd in the Memory, and being recited by Custom, it easily comes to pass that we lose our Fervency, grow cold, and sit down with the bare Words themselves that are pronounc'd, without any Engagement of the Mind or Heart.

Q. Mr. Dunton, Six of us not long ago, sent to you from L——B——N, the Two following Letters, Viz.

The First LETTER.

Dunton,

‘THOU art an impudent, foolish, brazen Son of a Bitch, and none but such a factious, vain, insignificant Wrascal as thy self, would have writ such a scurrilous Pamphlet against so good, a religious and pious Man as Doctor Sacheverell.

The Second LETTER.

Dunton,

‘THE most Learn'd, Reverend, and Zealous Dr. Sacheverell's Misfortunes, and your own foolish Ambition, having provok'd you to publish your scurrilous and impudent Pamphlet, entitl'd, *The Bull-Baiting in the Fire-work*; thereby falsely accusing and reproaching the aforesaid pious Dr. Sacheverell, is the Reason why I send this *Bull-baiting of thy self in Paper-work*; if which take the Effects I desire, is sufficient Recompence to one, who shall at present be nameless.

Mr. Dunton, These Two Letters were both written in L——B——N, and then sent (as we are inform'd by one of our SPIES) as far as Bristol, to be return'd to you in a Sheet of wast Paper, to put you to the Charge of double Postage: But as you have never taken any Notice of these Letters (in Dunton's Oracle) we fear they miscarry'd; we therefore desire to know whether you receiv'd 'em, and what you think of our Reflections on your Answer to Dr. Sacheverell's Sermon, entitl'd, *The Bull-Baiting*?

A. Accusations make no Man a Criminal; or if they did, I challenge the worst Enemy I have, to tax me with one base, unjust, ungrateful, or dishonourable Action, throughout the whole Course of my Life: But 'tis clear by these Two abusive and scurrilous Letters, that there is no Innocency so white, (or any Answer to a railing Sermon so just and necessary) but Envy and Malice will find Matter to asperse it, and I believe never was a baser Instance of Slander than is found in these Two Jacobite Letters.

Letters written by Six (nameless) Persons, as they call themselves; and they may well be ashamed to own their Names, as their Letters contain not one true Word, and have as little Truth to support 'em as their Hear-say of 301. which is every Word of it false. *What a Piece of Devilism is the Jacobite Cause, that has nothing to support it but known Lies and Calumnies!* So that you see, Sir Nameless, tho' I receiv'd your Two scurrilous Letters, that I had little Reason to take Notice of 'em in *Dunton's Oracle*, and the rather still, as the large Testimonials I have from every Person I have liv'd with, since my Misfortunes, (and more especially from the Person with whom I now live) of my punctual Justice, and strictly innocent Way of living, sets me much above taking Notice of such base Slanders and notorious Falshoods as are utter'd in these Two Letters, and since that, in G——street; which none but a Devil, or a Jacobite, wou'd write, or publish; and therefore, Sir *Know-posts*, rest assur'd, let me have fair Play, (I mean, attack me like Men of Honour, and fairly set your Names to what you publish, as I do) and I neither fear you nor any of your B——ds; for I'm credibly inform'd the fate of you had a By-b—— that forc'd him into W——lock; and for the decay'd G——men amongst you, their *Hackney* and f——lous Lives are sufficiently known in L——B——n, Fleet-st——, and other Places; tho' to do you Justice, you are all of you (comparatively) Saints to that *Fanus* (or *Ambodexter*) that so sneakingly and basely betray'd my Lodgings, whilst he pretended to be my Friend; (as he could be no other, had he but common Justice, or Gratitude in him) neither can I be mistaken concerning your *Informers*, as he told you several odd Things concerning my godly Wife, as were known to no Person in the World but himself and the Persons with whom I live. So that if you do me the least further Wrong, (either in my Person, or good Name) 'twill be fatal to your *Domestick Spy*, as he has betray'd my Safety, and must expect (upon the least Occasion) to bear the Scandal of being your Friend. Thus, Sir Nameless, I have fully answer'd your useles Question, and when you see my *Dying Farewel* to Dr. *Sacheverell*, (which I'm requested to write, and shall publish in *Dunton's Oracle*) you'll further see that I have advanc'd nothing in my Answer to Dr. *Sacheverell*, (entitl'd *The Bull-baiting*) but what I fairly own with my Name to it, and shall be ever ready to prove; for I think it a base Cowardice that strikes a Man in the Dark, (or with a nameless Libel) and then like a Serpent creeps into his Hole again, for Want of Courage to abett his Actions, a Practice I ever scorn'd and abhorr'd; and for that Reason I subscribe my Name to all I write, or publish, and so farewel, and repent of the Wrong you have done me, for I have nothing further to say to you, or to your spiteful, ignorant Letter, (for 'tis seen by it you han't Sense enough to write true *English*) except by your wincing at this Answer, you betray your Guilt, and so force me to discover your Names, and to draw your Pictures.

ADVERTISEMENT S.

IN my Second Love-Post expect great Variety of Love Cases and merry Intrigues, which by Reason of a long Preface, cou'd not come into the last Oracle.— In my Third

Love-Post the Reader shall be diverted with a new Map of the Kingdom of Love, and with a Pacquet of such News as will please the young Batchelors and Virgins;— And in my Fourth Love-Post the Ladies may expect a *Spiritual Amour*, (or the Marriage of Two Souls) according to Plato's Idea, as it pass'd in several Letters between Philaret and the ingenious Sapho.— I am further to give Notice, I receiv'd the Latin Poem upon the Mob, that Philanassus sent; and had I not found it in the Review and Observer, with many excellent Remarks upon it, it had been inserted in Dunton's Oracle.— I also receiv'd Two very nice and curious Questions concerning the Reconcilableness of God's Prescience with the Sins of Men, writ by Philologus; as also several curious Questions concerning Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell: All which shall have a full and (I hope) satisfactory Answer in Dunton's Oracle.— I shall only add, The great Variety of nice and curious Questions, and other Athenian News, that are daily sent to Dunton's Oracle, to furnish out his 3000 Posts, render it absolutely necessary to finish each Volume sooner than was at first design'd: This is therefore to give Notice, that upon finishing of each Eighteen Numbers that are publish'd every Tuesday and Saturday, there shall be publish'd Twelve Numbers all together, to compleat the Volume; to which shall be added a General Title, Preface and Index, as also an Emblem of the whole Mail, or 30 Posts, which shall be given gratis to all such that take in Dunton's Oracle Weekly. These Twelve Numbers, that compleat the Volume, will be sold for 12d. and the whole Volume (or 30 Numbers) for 2s. 6d. by John Morphew near Stationers Hall.

*** A Catalogue of Goods to be dispos'd of by way of Lots, at Mrs. Marriatt's, a Milliner in New-street, near Fetter-lane, 1998 Tickets to be drawn, there being but 11 Blanks to each Prize. Goods, viz. A Silver Salver, Silver Mug, Gold Rings, Silver Tea Spoons, Silver Salts, Silver Dram Cups, large Silver Spoons, a furbelow'd Scarf, fine China Tea-pot, Sattin Night Gowns, Sarsnet Hoods, Men's fine Silk Caps, French Necklaces, Pendants and Crosses, fine Snuff-boxes, rich Knots and Bridles, fine Cambrick Handkerchiefs, Men's Sleeves ruff'd and plain, Men's Neckcloths flourish'd and run, large fine Silk Pocket Handkerchiefs, Masks, Girdles, rich short Silk Aprons trimm'd with Gold and Silver; also black ones, rich brocaded Handkerchiefs work'd with Gold and Silver, black Hoods, Neckateens, fine Indian Fans, fine Muslin Heads, strip'd and plain, lac'd and edg'd, Gloves and Ribbons. The highest Lot is 5l. 10s. several of 3l. 2l. 10s. and 2l. The lowest Prize is 5s. Tickets to be deliver'd at the Place aforesaid at 12d. each. To be drawn in a Month, or sooner, if full, whereof publick Notice will be given in the Post-Man.— Note, This Sale of Goods is almost full.

+++ The Christian's Gazette, or News chiefly respecting the Invisible World; being a Pacquet for the pious Virtuosi on Subjects never started before. Written by John Dunton, Author of the Essay entitl'd The Hazard of a Death Bed-Repentance. Price 1s.

*** The Amorous War, or a Duel with the Passions, a Poem, in a Letter to a Friend. By a Gentleman of the University of Oxford. To which is added, the Defeat, or the Lover vanquish'd, and again rallying with a Smile. Sold by Tho. Darrack, Printer, in Peterborough-Court in Little-Britain, Price 2d.

LONDON: Printed by T. Darrack, in Little-Britain, and Sold by J. Morphew near Stationers Hall.